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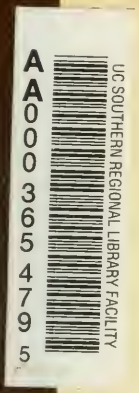
TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF
WILLIAM COWPER



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A

TRIBUTE

TO THE MEMORY OF

WILLIAM COWPER.

Second Edition, Enlarged and Improved.

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A

TRIBUTE

TO THE MEMORY OF

WILLIAM COWPER.

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TRIBUTE

TO THE MEMORY OF

WILLIAM COWPER,

AUTHOR OF THE TASK AND OTHER POEMS,

OCCASIONED BY THE PERUSAL OF HIS WORKS, AND HAYLEY'S MEMOIRS OF HIS LIFE.

By I. T. S.

Attachment strong
Springs from delight bestow'd. To me delight
Long hast thou giv'n; and I have giv'n thee praise.
Scott's Amwell.

But if unhappily deceiv'd, I dream,
And prove too weak for so sublime a theme;
Let Charity forgive me a mistake,
That zeal, not vanity, has chanc'd to make,
And spare the Poet, for his subjects sake.
Cowper's Charity.

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1803.

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OCCASIONAL STANZAS.

A Muse, unskill'd to touch th' harmonious string,
To virtuous Cowper, her just *tribute* pays.
At Friendship's call, she plumes her tender wing;
To Friendship, consecrates her artless lays.

And ye, who well the happier secret know,
At once t' instruct, to soothe and charm mankind,
Forgive, if here, no polish'd numbers flow;
If here, no cultivated flowers ye find.

But, if her desultory strain convey
One just, one genuine lesson to the heart;
If Truth and Virtue own her rude essay;
She asks no higher praise: for these impart
To her more pure delight, than wreaths supplied
From fam'd Castalia's spring, or Pindus' flowery side.

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A

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY

OF

COWPER.

GENIUS of COWPER, oft, in pensive mood,
I pore delighted o'er thy varied page,
And trace the pure effusions of thy wit,
Flowing in numbers musically sweet,
Easy and smooth as thy own winding Ouse,
And fraught with sentiments sublimer still.
'Twas thine to soothe with mild persuasive art,
With manly nervous eloquence to please,
Or temper with a just severity
Thy moral strain;—not proudly "conjur'd up
"To serve occasions of poetic pomp,"
But ever to thy Maker's glorious cause
Devoted;—nor less studious of the high
Immortal interests of thy fellow men;
When, thus, with thee, in converse sweet, awhile
Set free from life's entanglements, from all
Those busy cares; which oft, alas, impede

The better purposes of Christian grace,
And wean the soul from happiness and heav'n;—
My heart acknowledges th' inspiring theme;
And meditates thy praise.—Not cold the strain,
Nor vain the task, if, hap'ly, in th' essay,
I catch one pure, one genuine spark from thee.

Where are the Sons of Song, the rev'rend train,
Who once in Selma's sacred halls attun'd,
To deeds of virtuous praise, their trembling strings?
And where the pensive band, who o'er the urn
Of meaner genius and inferior fame,
Pour the soft stream of tributary tears,
Elegiac stanza and funereal hymn?
While Cowper's memory asks the plausive strain,
Why lie their lyres neglected and unstrung,
Unwept the bard of nature and of truth?
And all unconscious of their loss, supine
Sleep his lov'd Muses on th' Aonian hill?

O form'd by nature, as by virtue form'd
To polish, to instruct, improve thy age:
To give to poetry a sacred charm
Unfelt before,—and in one hallow'd theme,
To blend the Seraph's with the Poet's fire!

Permit a youth from letter'd fame remote,
And skill scholastic,—simple as sincere;
Whose sober footsteps strive not to attain
Parnassian heights;—who seeks no laurel there;
But, by fair Orwell's shores, with beauty crown'd,
And busy commerce, tho' by bard, as yet
Unsung their praise pre-eminent, devotes
To diff'rent labours his assiduous hours; *
Not prompt to flatter with unmeaning praise,
Tho' proud t' appreciate thy just desert;
One who unknown, yet lov'd thee, and who still
Esteems thy memory precious;—O permit
The luxury to sympathize with thee,
Afflicted mourner in a vale of tears!
To pay his humble tribute to thy worth,
And well directed talents;—since no voice
Of praise or censure can affect thee now.
And oh! howe'er for poesy unfit,
Unskill'd in language courtly or refin'd,
To soothe the nicer ear of classic taste;

* In offering to his friends and the public, a second edition of the *Tribute to Cowper*, the author takes this opportunity gratefully to acknowledge the indulgence they have bestowed on the first. He has corrected some inaccuracies, and made some additions to the original poem; but he is sensible, that there is still ample room to deprecate the severity of criticism.

Still let me strive, with humbler aim to win
Affections' partial eye, unapt to frown
On ev'n a muse like mine, that seeks to dress
Thy laurell'd portrait with wild "flow'rs of verse."
And, sure, the meed, that grateful truth bestows,
On virtue, ev'n in humbler sphere than thine;
In silent conflicts, steadily engag'd
With selfish passions, (no inglorious aim,)
And nobly consecrating all her pow'rs,
To works of pure beneficence and love,
Transcends th' applause, admiring nations pay
To warriors and to statesmen, oft acquir'd
By motives less refin'd, when scann'd by Him,
Whose wisdom penetrates the brilliant mask,
By interest or ambition oft assum'd;
Divests vain glory of her dazzling plumes,
And not the action values, but the heart.—
While wond'ring Senates their high names enroll,
Her's in a sweet memorial speeds to Heav'n;
And while their trophies grace th' historic page,
Her's shall endure, tho' suns and stars decay.

Hail, gentle bard, whose honour'd page combines
The various pow'rs of verse—The march sublime
Of Milton's song, majestic as his theme;

And his, the pride of Avon's tuneful stream,
Whose sprightly fancy to fair Albion's shores
Woo'd the coy Muses from their secret cell,
And led them wond'ring at his magic skill,
From their lov'd Latium and the Mantuan plain.
ADDISON, rousing a degen'rate age,
In language chaste as his own virtuous mind,
From the low maze of error and of ill;
Who taught mankind, and trod himself the way,
Thro' Wisdom's paths, to Truth's divine abode.
Th' harmonious strain of him *, who erst beguil'd,
With the rich treasures of his classic store,
Mid Twick'nam's bow'rs, the list'ning sons of Thame.
THOMSON, melodious as his vocal groves,
Smooth as his Summer's chrystal rills, and soft
As vernal airs; sweet Nature's artless child;
And pious YOUNG, whose sober voice prolongs,
In plaintive warblings thro' night's silent reign,
Important topics;—*Friendship, Time and Death,*
The Christian Triumph, th' Infidel Reclaim'd,
"To Vice, confusion, and to Virtue, peace,"
All seem to breathe their spirit thro' thy strains,
In one harmonious concert, well refin'd

* Pope.

From flash and feculence of grosser wit.
The liv'liest flow'rs of each, with nicest care,
Cull'd by a master's hand, in mingled wreaths,
Of native beauty, dignify thy TASK.
Yet, who, inspir'd by Nature's artless charms,
So faithfully reflected in thy page,
Regrets not, that to Ouse's silent tide,
To Olney's level meads, and pastures green,
And Weston's rural bow'rs and gay alcoves,
Thy smooth, unvarying prospects were confin'd.
O Cumbria*! would, that to thy mountain streams,
And glens romantic, Cowper had retir'd;
Where giant Skiddaw, over Derwent's lake
Frowns in imperial grandeur;—while beneath,
In gentle contrast, lovely Keswick lies.
Where, at thy awful cat'ract, dark Lowdore,
Thro' shatter'd rocks, in foaming sheets descends
A headlong torrent, with tumultuous roar,
Jarring the firm foundations of the hills.
There huge Helvellyn's forked crags defy,
The rudest rage of elemental war;
And those tremendous cliffs, abrupt and hoar,

* By a species of poetic licence, the author has taken the liberty of introducing into Cumberland, scenery, which he is conscious, does not strictly belong to that county, though situated on its borders.

Which proudly tow'ring o'er the glassy stream
Of blue Ullswater, eye, with silent awe,
Their savage forms reflected in the wave;
Fast by whose lonely banks retir'd, where he*,
Th' unwearied Friend of Afric's injured race,
The firm Abettor of their sacred cause,
Once dwelt, midst scenery, like his views sublime;
And plan'd with pure philanthropy of soul,
For captive nations, liberty and joy.
There peaceful Grasmere's sweet, secluded vale,
To solitude and contemplation dear,
Recalls Arcadia's long forgotten scenes,
By poets feign'd, of innocence th' abode,
And manners simple, unadult'rate, pure.
There thy soft wooded shores, Winandermere,
With splendid Villas grac'd, whose bow'rs among,
The pious Watson † spends his studious hours,
In matchless beauty charm the ravish'd eye.
There, on some Alpine precipice enthron'd
Sublime, his ready pencil sure had found,
A wide spread field of wonder and delight;

* Clarkson, the benevolent advocate for the abolition, of that disgraceful traffic, the Slave-trade.

† The learned and pious Watson, bishop of Llandaff, who has a seat at Calgarth, on the banks of Winandermere.

And his rapt spirit, 'midst congenial glooms,
A nobler, bolder landscape had pourtray'd
Of nature, lovely in her wildest forms.

Nor let the muse on flow'rs alone intent,
His better views forget; that love which breath'd
Glory to God in highest Heav'n enthron'd;
Nor less on earth, peace and good-will to men;—
His tender spirit, his religious warmth
In advocating truth's exalted cause;
His heart for friendship fashion'd, and his cheek,
Wet with benign Compassion's pearly dew.

Cowper, while thus I contemplate thy pow'rs,
Admiring them and thee, and doubtful which,
To honour most, the Christian or the Bard,
Alike pre-eminent,—I must deplore
The morbid vein of melancholy hue,
That ting'd thy life, that checquer'd all thy days,
" And cast in shadows thy illustrious close."
Who cannot but lament that thy fair sky
Was ever darken'd by dismay and doubt;
That ever mental clouds should intervene,
To mar thy peace, to wreck thy better hopes,
And veil the sun of righteousness from thee.

Children of Pity, who, for other's woe,
In secret shed the sympathetic tear;
And ye, who on life's ocean-wave serene,
Ply the smooth oar, and spread the silken sail,
With gales propitious, summer suns, and skies,
Cloudless as those that Indian climes enjoy:
Ye, who on pleasure's downy lap reclin'd,
Bid fancy form her visionary scenes,
Soft as Ffestiniog's past'ral vale, or hers,
Sublime Llangollen! thro' whose calm recess,
Old Dee, meandering o'er his rocky bed,
Sees tir'd imagination pleas'd forego
Her fairy landscapes and ideal charms,
Won by the nat'ral grandeur she surveys:
Here gently pausing o'er the solemn theme,
One gen'rous drop bestow; where he, adorn'd
With purest gifts of science, and of truth;
Amidst the pressure of severe disease,
Stood,—like the oak assail'd by wintry storms,
Leafless and shudd'ring at the rude * attack;

* The situation of his mind, under this trying dispensation, may be best conceived, from the following extract of a letter, written a short time before the closing scene of his life; wherein, alluding to his beloved nature, he says, "In one day, in one minute, I should rather have said, she became an universal blank to me, and though from a different cause, yet with an effect, as difficult to remove, as blindness itself."

A spectacle to angels and to men.
Ah, then, all earthly honours quick became,
Obscure and faded in his wounded sight;
His intellectual and colloquial powers,
Erewhile so brilliant, suffer'd sore eclipse;
Social endearments could delight no more:
" The sweet Companion and the Friend sincere,"
Had lost their powers of pleasing, and unheard
Strove to divert his pangs, and whisper peace.
View'd by his joyless eye, the once-lov'd face
Of lovely Nature, wore a gen'ral gloom,
And breath'd perfumes, and proffer'd flow'rs in vain.
The orb of day,—fair Cynthia's silver lamp,
All Heaven's silent host;—the balmy Spring,
The fragrant Summer,—yellow Autumn, ripe
With fruits delicious,—Winter's social train
Of fire-side joys, when round the sparkling hearth,
With sprightly converse, or with books beguil'd
Time swiftly flies;—all, all unheeded past
In sad succession; having lost the zest,
They then deriv'd, when thro' them he beheld
The presence of his God.——O sick of soul,
And far beyond the reach of human skill!
Ev'n Gilead had no healing art for thee,
Thou found'st no balm, and no Physician there.

Thus, where in rude, fantastic forms array'd,
Stern Nature frowns o'er Cambria's rugged shores;
(Rugged, but not of that good hand bereft,
Which gives ev'n humble poverty to smile;
And o'er her barren rocks and gloomy fells,
Dispenses calm content and decent joy,
To glitt'ring crowds unknown,) in sullen state
Where old Segontium's * ivy mantled tow'r
O'erlooks the Druid's † venerable isle;
Or thine, Caernarvon, monument august,
Of feudal grandeur, awful in decay!
Whose mouldering ruins give reflection birth,
And silently instruct: thus have I seen,
At ev'ning's closing hour, the setting sun
Tinge with refulgent streaks the neighb'ring hills;
Which gently soft'ning thro' the twilight grey,
O'er their green vallies cast a sombre shade;
While, on majestic Snowdon's awful cone,
The dark cloud lingers, lingers unremov'd;
Till night envelops all the prospect round,
And silence reigns, save where rude waterfalls,

* The ruins of an ancient Roman station, to which, or the contiguous and more modern ruins of Caernarvon Castle, the description applies.

† Anglesea.

With their hoarse murmurings interrupt the scene.
As Snowdon tow'ring 'midst his neighb'ring hills;
So, thou, on eminence of genius plac'd,
Conspicuous; and like him with clouds enwrapt,
(Apt embelm of thy dignity and fate,)
Saw'st mental darkness gather round thy brow;
Till all was blank and barrenness around.

Yet Mercy sweeten'd then thy bitter cup,
When Friendship most affectionate and kind,
In female form attir'd, watch'd thy pale hours,
With unabated and religious hope;
When pious Unwin * with unwearied love,
Tho' Nature shudder'd at the painful task,
Her gentle office steadily pursu'd.

To finite comprehensions, most unfit,
God's aims to scan, or measure his designs;
(Partial observers of his wond'rous works,)
Severe indeed thy dispensation seems;

* Mary Unwin, the pious friend and affectionate companion of the Poet; who with a magnanimity of kindness, rarely surpassed, watched over him, during a long visitation of morbid depression; when to a feeling mind, such a duty must have been peculiarly afflicting. It was to this interesting woman, when far advanced into the vale of years; that he addressed the exquisite and pathetic stanzas, entitled "*My Mary*."

And innocence and sanctity like thine,
Appear deserving of a happier fate.
And who could witness thy meridian blaze,
Unfelt, sweet bard, commiseration's pangs,
When clouds and darkness shadow'd all thy powers?
But 'tis not meet for mortals to arraign
His providence, who orders all things well;
Tho' frailty questions, faith must needs adore,
An end mysterious by mysterious means.
For sure, thy heavenly Master, gentle bard,
He, who inspir'd, and first attun'd thy lays,
Knew thee the best; knew best thy innate worth,
Thy fervent piety, thy truth sincere,
Thy uncorrupt integrity of soul,
And all the genuine virtues of thy mind.
He, for some gracious end, to us unknown,
Yet still in sov'reign wisdom; he saw fit,
T' afflict thy spirit with this awful scourge;
And taught thee thro' long years, depress'd and sad,
To hang thy mournful harp upon the willows.
Perhaps, 'twas meant to wean thy ardent mind,
From aims terrestrial, and beneath thy care;
The world's applause, and vain desire of fame,
(Usual attendants on superior parts;)
To shew thee all thy weakness, to subdue,

That ev'n in thee, which ask'd the chast'ning rod:
—Perhaps, to bring thee nearer to himself,
And purify thee for thy heav'nly home.

'Tis o'er—the last sad scene is clos'd,—thy heart
Shall bleed no longer;——thy severest TASK,
At length perform'd; with pious obsequies,
Slow to the silent grave, the funeral train
Thy cold remains convey; richly bedew'd,
With pity's tend'rest tear. Proud of its charge,
The marble tablet speaks "thy spotless fame;"
And tells of all "the magic of thy song,"
In strains of kind eulogium; whilst the pen
Of faithful HAYLEY, to thy memory just,
By Lavant's stream*, (for his and Collins' sake
Dear to the sons of verse,) thy loss bemoans;
And in smooth elegance of polish'd phrase,
To an admiring world pourtrays thy life.
And surely long as CHARITY and TRUTH,
Have place in human bosoms; long as charms
Of CONVERSATION or RETIREMENT please:
Long as EXPOSTULATION'S warning voice

* In allusion to the residence of William Hayley, esq. the elegant editor of "the life and posthumous works" of Cowper, near Chichester; which place is celebrated also, as having been the residence of the Poet Collins.

" Raises her shrillest cry in British ears ;"
Or HOPE exalts and animates the soul,
Thy verse shall flourish ; and sensations mixt
Of love and rev'rence, shall embalm thy page.

Yet some there are, who call thy honest warmth
Intemp'rate ; when too faithfully apply'd
To their own darling foibles ; some, who think
The language of thy censure too severe ;
When aim'd at follies by the world at large,
Deem'd venial, or of innocent import,
Let those remember well, how hard the task,
For minds with virtuous indignation fill'd,
'Gainst principles and practices corrupt,
Their zeal to limit to the narrow bounds,
Which such ingenious moralists require :
But, measuring all things by the gospel rule,
Must praise, or blame, as truth directs the way.
Happy the stream, which glides in even course,
And neither stagnates, nor o'erflows its banks !

And thou Britannia, much lov'd honor'd isle,
The nurse of science, and the lib'ral arts !
Where safely shelter'd by thy fostering care,
They deck with sweetest flow'rs the matchless soil,

Forgive one fervent wish ;—that all thy bards,
Had pour'd the monitory strain, like him,
Whose soften'd spirit breathes thro' ev'ry line,
Rich with celestial ardour ;—and like him,
Bade satire dart at vice her keenest stings ;
Rais'd drooping virtue, and with pow'rs sublime,
Bath'd Sharon's roses with Pierian dew.
Perhaps her favor'd shores might then behold,
Piety flourish with augmented strength,
Nor Christian arguments in vain persuade,
Nor Scripture teach, nor preachers plead in vain.
But shall the Muse, to thy fair fame unjust,
O, Albion ! from a chosen few with-hold,
(Thy sons of latter birth,) her best applause ?
While names like these in mem'ry's page survive,
And look defiance o'er th' assaults of time ?
Illustrious Jones *, above earth's meaner mass
Exalted ;—less for erudition fam'd,
Than sanctity of soul. Old Greece and Rome,
Spread their rich treasures, and th' astonish'd East

* Sir William Jones, late one of the Judges of the supreme court of Bengal, celebrated for his uncommon attainments, in the languages and oriental literature.—His solidity of judgement, acuteness of understanding and profound erudition, were only equalled by his sincere humility, fervent piety, and the amiable dispositions of his mind. This excellent person died at Calcutta in the year 1794, beloved and regretted, by European and Hindoo.

Displayed for him, her gay and glitt'ring stores
Luxuriant; yet his most sublime renown,
A Christian temper and a virtuous life.—
O early snatch'd from this desult'ry scene,
(With us, too pure, too spotless to remain,)
Accept th' unvarnish'd meed, a stranger pays!
He too, the champion of immortal Truth,
"He, whom each virtue fir'd, each grace refin'd,"
Ingenious BEATTIE *, who to Scotia's hills,
In sweetest numbers, told the Minstrel tale.
And lov'd of science, and th' Aonian quire,
Their ROSCOE †, grac'd with green and living bays,
To British eyes, unfolds th' Italian scroll,
And wakes soft music from the Tuscan lyre;
While Florence, prouder seems to rear her tow'rs;
And Leo and Lorenzo breathe again.

But, mark, where Learning, Genius, Virtue bend,
In silent sorrow o'er their HENRY'S ‡ urn;

* James Beattie, LL. D. author of an Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth; the Minstrel, and other poems.

† William Roscoe, the justly celebrated author of two elegant, historical works, the Life of Lorenzo the magnificent, and the Life and Pontificate of Leo the Tenth.

‡ See "Remains of Henry Kirk White, late of St. John's College, Cambridge,"—recently published by Robert Southey; which exhibit a

And, with no " vulgar sympathy," deplore
Him, call'd by Heav'n, in early youth away;
Him, by the Muse, with genuine wreaths adorn'd,
Nor doom'd " in loneliness, unwept to fade."
Lo! pensive Granta, with her gentlest tears
Bedews his pious memory; and amidst
Her academic bowers, in him laments
A promis'd harvest of celestial fruits.
—By Cam's fair margin, on some aged elm,
Attun'd no more to melting melodies,
Or chaste simplicity of sacred song,
His lyre hangs mute; save when the ev'ning gale,
In plaintive murmurs sighs along the strings;
" Weep not for me,"—it says, or seems to say,
" Weep not for me,—but rather for yourselves."
But, tho' no longer to the listening ear
Of friendship, he may speak; no longer fill,
With fond delight, affection's moisten'd eye:
Yet, faith exulting, hails with holy joy
His upward flight. True piety like his,

striking and instructive instance of extraordinary talents, early dedicated to the sacred cause of piety and virtue. This pious and amiable young man finished his course, at the age of twenty-one years

——————Quid virtus et quid sapientia possit,
Utile proposuit nobis exemplar.

Ensures its own unspeakable reward.
Grace makes the Christian, and not length of days.
" The man of wisdom is the man of years."

Religion *, real, practical, sincere,
Howe'er the senseless infidel may scoff,
Is an important cause,—a serious thing:
The link that man to his Creator binds;
Which int'rest, duty, prompt alike to own.
Remotest climes have felt; and every age
Polish'd or rude, her secret sway confess'd.

* The author hopes, that those who are seriously disposed, will not think this disgression misplaced. It appeared to him not only to flow naturally from his subject, but to be comformable to the sanctified spirit of Cowper; whose constant endeavour was to blend the fruits of instruction with the flowers of verse. At the same time, he is sensible that none can attempt to walk in his paths, unless guided by the same spirit, without suffering loss by comparison.

With England's bard, with Cowper who shall vie
Original in strength and dignity?
With more than painter's fancy blest, with lays
Holy as Saints to heaven expiring raise.
* * * * * * * * * * * * * *
How sweet to hear from that Parnassian mount,
Mild waters welling from the favor'd fount:
Oh, never may Castalia's streams divide
From Siloa's brook, and Jordan's hallow'd tide.

Pursuits of Literature.

The Roman conqu'ror, and th' Athenian sage,
The learn'd Egyptian, and th' intrepid band,
Who boldly guarded Troy's imperial domes;
Th' untutor'd Indian, 'midst his tow'ring palms,
His proud bananas, and his myrtle bowers,
And ev'n Columbia's rude and barb'rous tribes,
Ador'd the Idols of their erring choice
With pious reverence; or devoutly rais'd
Their mystic altars to the POWER UNKNOWN.
For them, no page of inspiration shone,
With radiant brightness, partially illum'd,
They walk'd; imploring a superior guide.
Such, SOCRATES, wert thou, enlighten'd sage,
And gentle, or to vice alone severe.
Such thy illustrious PLATO * too; whose eye
Saw Life and Immortality reveal'd,
Tho' faintly. SENECA, sublimely read,
In Wisdom's laws; with martyr constancy,
His virtuous *morals* sealing—with his life.
SOLON, sagacious, humble, temp'rate, firm;
Whispering unwelcome truths to royal ears.
Just ARISTIDES. Good FABRICIUS, poor,
Yet uncorrupt. ANAXAGORAS, fraught

* Plato, the disciple of Socrates.

With true philosophy. And, such no less,
Stern CATO, vainly struggling to impart
His rigid virtue to degen'rate Rome.
Such, were the Heathen, who, *without the law*,
In temperance, patience, piety excell'd.
Now, Truth celestial, from our clearer skies,
Has chas'd the clouds of Ignorance, and bestow'd
A steady light; divine Religion holds
An ampler sway, divested of those fogs
Which darken'd theirs. She solaces alike,
The cottage and the throne; with kings allied,
Has giv'n an added lustre to their crowns;
On learning's venerable form conferr'd
True dignity; and in the lowly cell
Of meek, unletter'd poverty retir'd,
Diffus'd unseen, her sacred odours round:
And universal, as th' all-chearing sun,
To sect unlimited, with beams benign,
Cheer'd humble HERVEY'S meditative hours;
Blest pious WATTS; illumin'd BARCLAY'S page;
O'er virtuous DODDRIDGE bade her day-spring rise;
Serenely smil'd on NEWTON'S * closing scene,

* John Newton, late rector of St. Mary's Woolnoth, London, of whose chequered life, some very interesting memoirs, written by himself, are prefixed to his works.

And still irradiates PORTEUS'* blameless life.

As tow'rds the magnet turns the kindred steel;
So, hearts once purify'd by heav'nly fires,
From Zion's holy hill, and warm from thence,
With lively and devout affections fill'd;
Bid, ever reascend a sacred flame,
Of ardent aspiration; homage sweet,
Whose fragrant incense "points to Heav'n again."
Such are the righteous; who, indeed baptiz'd,
To all the newness of regen'rate life,
And pure in heart; their all of idol self
Subdu'd by conqu'ring grace; their every crown
Cast down, in meek humility of soul,
At Jesus' feet, are favor'd to foretaste
Ev'n here, a portion of their rich reward
Of peace, amidst time's ills; and can rejoice
With trembling, while, not yet from woe exempt,
Their tender sorrows flow for Israel's sake.
These love their country, with that love, which seeks,
Her true prosperity, and virtuous growth

* Porteus, bishop of London.

Who, but must praise, when bold in strength divine,
Prelatic virtue guards the Christian shrine,
Pleas'd from the pomp of science to descend,
And teach the people, as their hallow'd friend? *Pursuits of Literature.*

In that, which can exalt her, 'bove reproach;
And, with pure patriot spirit, all unwarp'd
By party prejudice, or selfish views,
Observe th' alarming inroads vice has made
In her fair borders, with unfeign'd regret.
Cloth'd with that charity, which knows no bounds,
By intervening seas and mountains, these
Mark "shameful variance betwixt man and man,"
With just abhorrence of th' unchristian deed;
And mingle with their secret prayers to Heav'n,
For suff'ring nations, a fraternal tear.
But, when degen'rate practices, and base,
By truth and policy alike disown'd,
Escape the public censure; when supine,
The people slumbering in their sins, forget
Their Maker and themselves; when loose, relax'd
Morality prevails, and is maintain'd
By arguments, which ev'n th' enlighten'd band
Of pagan sages, had disdain'd to hold;
Warm indignation mingles with their grief,
Unknowing, if to blame or pity most,
Such blindness and obduracy of heart.

O happy England! wert thou but as just,
As thou art favor'd; happy, then indeed!

O, that thy gratitude kept equal pace,
With the rich mercies Providence bestows !—
While trembling Europe weeps her slaughter'd sons,
And wasted cities ; while her mournful gales
Come fraught with widow's and with orphan's sighs :
What, but Eternal Goodness guards thy shores ;
And gives thee quiet, tho' the nations rage ?

But, hark, a joyful sound invades my ears !
It speaks my Cowper's righteous pray'r fulfill'd ;
And wide proclaims his country's virtuous praise :
While at humanity's all-powerful call,
Arous'd ;—she hears the hapless Negro's plea,
And bids th' unjust, th' inhuman traffic cease.—
Rejoice, oh Afric !—From thy breezy hills,
And fertile vallies, let one general song
Of grateful praise arise ; from shore to shore,
With reverence bid thy scatter'd nations bless
The Mighty Spirit ; who hath fill'd our hearts,
With pity tow'rds thee ; and sublimely touch'd
No common chords of mercy for thy sake.
O injur'd land, by us too long imbru'd
With kindred blood ; by us, alas, too long
In sorrows drench'd and darken'd with despair !
May thy poor sable sons again pursue

In peace their wonted labours, and, when eve
Spreads o'er thy plains her tranquillizing stole,
At ease enjoy, beneath their spreading groves
Of spicy fragrance, undisturb'd repose:
Since now, no more Britannia mars thy soil
With deeds of rapine, cruelty and wrong,
No more, by warm compassion's tear, unmov'd,
Remorseless, severs life's endearing ties;
No longer, seeks in servile chains to bind,
Men,—by the common rights of nature, free;
Though differing in the colour of their kind *;
Men,—thro' the medium of atoning love,
Heirs of salvation, equally with those
Who boast the privilege of Christian birth.
—Ah! this is truly glorious, and, reflects
More pure and genuine lustre o'er her fame,
Than all the naval vict'ries she has won:
Than all her armies, fleets and flags can boast.—

* See Cowper's pathetic poem the Negro's Complaint.

Deem our nation brutes no longer,
Till some reason ye shall find,
Worthier of regard, and stronger,
Than the colour of our kind.

For farther particulars, on this interesting subject, see Clarkson's history of the abolition of the Slave-Trade.

Who knows, but this her pious sacrifice
Heaven, with divine complacency surveys ?
For this, preserves her borders, and for this,
Keeps the destroying angel from her isle ?
—God is a God of Justice ! and one act
Of sacred justice, by a nation wrought,
May win his favor ; and perhaps avert
Impending judgements from a guilty land.

Ah ! should the Lion of the princely tribe
Of Judah, visit thy benighted shores,
O, Africa ! and o'er thy peopled plains
The Sun of Truth and Righteousness arise,
With healing in his wings benign, to pour
The sacred radiance of the gospel day !
How beauteous then upon thy mountain tops
The messenger of peace,——his feet, who brings
Good tidings of salvation ; to proclaim
To all thy listening isles——Jehovah reigns !
Then from the cruel bonds of sin and death,
By grace divine set free, thou would'st enjoy
True liberty. Then violence no more
Would fill thy land ; and envy, malice, strife,
Revenge, and brutal passions cease t' embroil
Thy happy country ; and thou would'st confess

Their chains to be more galling; and their stripes
Severer, than the pangs European pride,
And unrelenting avarice could inflict.

'Tis such Religion, gracious Heav'n approves,
Whose lasting fruits are righteousness and peace:
Such our great Lord himself inspir'd, and such
His saints and martyrs struggled to maintain;
Unlike that virtue of ephem'ral date,
Virtue miscall'd—which shudders at the touch
Of rude adversity; and shrinks from pain:
'Tis such as can sustain life's drooping hour,
And cheer with smiles the languid bed of death.
Not his—who, wilder'd in the endless maze
Of metaphysic lore, spends his dull hours,
In cold research of principles abstract;
Who, with a curious, but too forward hand,
Attempts the mystic curtain to undraw,
By sov'reign wisdom, kindly plac'd 'twix't man,
And knowledge for his feebler pow'rs unfit.
Enough for him, the path of life is plain;
Faith and obedience know it and rejoice,
And he who runs, may read the sacred truth.
Nor his, who idly makes it to consist,
In lifeless cold observances; and slights,

For the dead letter all the vital warmth,
Of spiritual worship; who employs
His time and talents in the vain attempt,
"To please his ear, whose eye is on the heart."
For surely while we feel no conscious pang,
For past transgressions; eagerly embrace
The interests, pleasures and pursuits of time,
And slight "the moment of eternal things,"
Our faith becomes the empty argument
Of learned jargon, and the lore of schools;
And all our pray'rs a mockery of HIM,
Who weighs our actions, knows our secret thoughts.
Such, was not thine, oh Cowper! thine was warm,
(Ere yet a cruel malady forbad,)
With heav'nly hope; and in thy life were seen,
Thy doctrines, and thy arguments deduc'd
From the pure "fountain of eternal love."
Twas thine to make the purposes of song,
Nobly subservient to truths * awful cause:

* It is much to be regretted, that among the numbers, who have aspired to the laurels of Parnassus, so few have attained, to the dignified character of a Christian Poet: here Cowper peculiarly and eminently shines; his piety was of a pure and exalted nature; warm, but not bigotted; grave, but not ascetic; "exact, but not precise; tho' meek, keen-ey'd;" and his life, when unoppressed by the gloom of constitutional melancholy, in a lively manner, exemplified the truth of his own just and beautiful Axiom; that, Religion

Its sacred dictates thy acknowledg'd guide;
Thy highest treasure, thy supreme delight,
At once thy consolation and thy theme.

Not like the fool, improvident, and vain,
Who laid his weak foundation on the sands
Of human wisdom; that when winds and waves,
Of trial and affliction shook the house,
It sank beneath the overwhelming flood:
But rather like the wise, who having built,
With prudent caution, and a single eye,
To that, which shall withstand the wreck of time,
His mansion on the everlasting rock:
Unmov'd beheld it, firm abide th' assault
Of warring elements, and stand secure.

Thy life's a wholesome lesson, good for all,
Who woo instruction in the walks of time,
To ponder well; and hap'ly thus extract
A balsam from thy tears; though nature shrink,

Religion does not censure, or exclude,
Unnumber'd pleasures, harmlessly pursu'd.
While all the happy man possess'd before,
The gift of nature, or the classic store,
Is made subservient to the grand design,
For which heav'n form'd the faculty divine.

Reluctant to receive th' unwelcome cup,
That mars her joy, to med'cine her disease.—
Afflictions are the ministers of love,
By heav'n appointed :—happy, if they serve
To bring us nearer home !—to wean our hearts
From toys and trifles ; and to fix them there,
Where only lasting happiness is found !

To Him, who made thee all thou wert, we trust
In full assurance of its blest reward,
Thy loosen'd spirit, its redemption wrought,
By long probation : confident, in hope,
Attain'd its heav'nly mansion ; well prepar'd,
As gold by long refinement to receive
That full fruition of immortal bliss,
It here so fondly, so devoutly sought.
There in Jehovah's presence, wip'd away,
All sorrow from thine eyes ; and having kept
His righteous law ; thy peace for ever flows,
Like Jordan's stream, and as the countless waves
Of yon extended sea, thy righteousness.
Mortality's frail garments cast aside ;
Corruptible put off for incorrupt ;
And with the Lamb's unspotted robes array'd,
Made meet to mingle with th' angelic train

Of that celestial city; all whose walls
Are sure salvation, and whose gates are praise;
Thou'rt safely landed on th' immortal coast,
Where in full triumph the Messiah reigns.

There,—'midst the splendours of eternal day,
Applauding angels hail the welcome guest;
Like faithful Abdiel *, to the empyreal courts
Of Heav'n returning; for that proving hour,
More bright, by disobedience unseduc'd,
When he, th' assembled pow'rs of hell withstood;
Or some fair dove, her wings with silver tipt,
And all her feathers bright with yellow gold,
Enlarg'd to glorious liberty and life.
There ever sheltered from the darksome clouds,
That hover'd o'er thy doubting path, whilst here,
And often seem'd to thy distemper'd eye,

* See Milton's exquisite and instructive picture of the singular fidelity of Abdiel. *Paradise Lost, Book 5th.*

So spake the seraph Abdiel, faithful found
Among the faithless, faithful only he;
Among innumerable false, unmov'd,
Unshaken, unseduc'd, unterrify'd,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal:
Nor number, nor example, with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
Though single.

Awfully low'ring, as with tempests fraught;
Thy fears now all are hush'd, and ev'ry pang,
Of time and sense, in sure possession lost.
Beauty for ashes; oh the blest exchange!
And oil of joy, to mourning now succeeds.
Wak'd by his voice, who tun'd thy trembling strings,
With genuine fervor of seraphic fire;
New songs of gladness from thy lyre ascend,
Sweeter than all the Poet sang before:
Whilst thou rejoicing join'st the gen'ral praise,
Of thy Redeemer, wise in all his ways;
And own'st with gratitude his sov'reign skill,
Who sometimes, "wounds to heal," but ne'er to kill.

SONNET

TO THE ORWELL.

Orwell, delightful stream, whose waters flow
Fring'd with luxuriant beauty to the main!
Amid thy woodlands taught, the Muse could fain,
On thee, her grateful eulogy bestow.
Smooth and majestic though thy current glide,
And bustling Commerce plough thy liquid plain;
Tho' grac'd with loveliness thy verdant side,
While all around enchantment seems to reign:
These glories still, with filial love, I taste,
And feel their praise;——yet thou hast one beside
To me more sweet; for on thy banks reside,
Friendship and Truth combin'd; whose union chaste
Has sooth'd my soul;——and these shall bloom sublime,
When fade the fleeting charms of Nature and of Time.

FINIS.

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